

March 24, 2004

The Honorable Carl R. Johnson, Chairman
Senate Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 104
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 1136, relative to homeowner exemptions from certain environmental permitting and relative to certification as a wetland scientist.

Dear Chairman Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1136, which would exempt homeowners from certain environmental permitting.

As you know, the Department of Environmental Services (DES) has been working closely with Representative Patten and various professional groups including the New Hampshire Joint Board of Licensure (the Board), the New Hampshire Association of Natural Resource Scientists (NHANRS) and the Granite State Designers and Installers Association (GSDI) to correct and clarify language found in both RSA 310-A and RSA 482-A. As a result of these meetings, HB 1136 was amended to address the issues of concern identified by all parties. DES has reviewed and supports the amended bill.

In summary, the proposed language includes:

1. Changes to RSA 310-A:77 and RSA-A:79 to provide an exemption that would allow a homeowner to delineate wetlands and prepare plans for driveway and utility access to their primary residence.
2. Changes to RSA 310-A:84 to more clearly establish eligibility and experience necessary for certification as a wetland scientist.
3. Changes to RSA 482-A that would require DES to establish a rule waiver process.
4. Changes RSA-482-A:3, V(a) to allow the filing of the Notification of Forest Management or Timber Harvest Activities form to satisfy the permitting requirements for minimum wetlands impact activities.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Please call either me at 271-3503 or Rene Pelletier at 271-2951 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

cc: Representatives Betsy Patten, Kathleen Taylor, Janet Wall